

## RUSSELL BEGAYE PRESIDENT JONATHAN NEZ VICE PRESIDENT

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## BEGAYE-NEZ ADMINISTRATION SAVES 48 JOBS, NSDP EMPLOYEES TO REPORT TO WORK TOMORROW

WINDOW ROCK-The Office of the President and Vice President (OPVP) worked in rapid response and calculated effort in assembling the right departments to bring 48 Navajo Nation Special Diabetes Project (NSDP) employees back to work effective Jan. 13, 2016.

"We are committed to making sure that we keep our people employed and continuing to receive income. It's devastating for anyone to be sent home, not knowing if they'll be able to pay their bills or support their families," said President Russell Begaye.

On Jan. 8, NDSP received a notice of award from Indian Health Service (IHS) for a total approved budget of \$2,483,988 dollars. Personnel costs including salaries, wages and fringe benefits were not authorized in the notice of award.

In awarding NSDP \$2.4M, IHS didn't provide any notice to the Navajo Nation that the \$4M carry forward would not be included which is authorized for personnel costs.

Because personnel costs were not authorized in the notice of award, the Navajo Department of Health (NDOH) Executive Office instructed NSDP program staff not to report to work effective Jan. 12, until further notice. The situation affected 48 NSDP employees.

The \$4M shortfall in funding caused OPVP, to assemble the Office of Management and Budget, the Department of Justice and NDOH to actively pursue IHS headquarters to obtain the appropriate authorization to access funding for personnel costs.

"It's critical that the Navajo Nation keeps programs like NSDP in operation to further our commitment to fighting obesity and diabetes and to provide healthier lifestyles to our people," President Begaye said. "After hearing about NSDP's situation, I made sure that the affected employees would return to work tomorrow."

"OPVP recognizes the critical need NSDP provides to our people for diabetes prevention and education. NSDP employees are integral in providing these services," Vice President Nez added. "We fully appreciate their work and made sure their services were continued.

As of 6 p.m. on Jan. 12, NDOH-Special Diabetes Project is calling all personnel staff to report to work as regularly scheduled and to resume regular program operations effective tomorrow morning, Jan. 13, 2016.

All Navajo Nation wellness centers will be open accordingly.